



DRUGS that may affect your driving

Certain over-the-counter medicines, known as OTC or nonprescription drugs, may affect your ability to drive.

Read the Drug Facts label and use the medicine exactly as directed, advises the FDA.

Look for such statements as “you may get drowsy,” “marked drowsiness will occur,” “be careful when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery,” or “do not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery when using this product.”

Some of these seemingly harmless drugs for allergies or an upset stomach are not harmless at all, even though you can buy them without a prescription.

Certain medications may make you drowsy fairly quickly. Their effects can last several hours. Others may cause “hangover-like” effects, even the next day.

Common OTC medicines that can cause drowsiness or impaired driving are antihistamines (often used for a runny nose or watery eyes), antidiarrheals (used to treat or control diarrhea), and antiemetics (taken for nausea, vomiting, or dizziness).